

Editorial resolutions

A rather belated Happy New Year to all our readers! I have just moved offices to make room for a third obstetric theatre to be built. This involved a major decluttering and discarding of 10 years worth of accumulated, mostly redundant, piles of paper. However secreted within the masses of needlessly retained conference programmes, outdated versions of guidelines, draft versions of papers and Christmas cards from more than 5 years ago, I found several very precious things which justified the time I spent going through the mountains of paper, rather than just putting them undisturbed into the recycling bag.

The first was a thank you letter from a patient from 1998. She had had severe hyperemesis and the letter expressed her gratitude for my management of her condition with corticosteroids, saying she was sure her son would not be alive without my help. She also thanked me for giving her corticosteroids rather than offering her randomization into the placebo-controlled trial I was running at the time (proof that despite my best endeavours I was perhaps not in equipoise for all cases). This letter was poignant because 2 weeks previously I had been sent a handwritten letter by her son saying that 'my mother always told me she owed my existence to you' and then requesting that he come and spend a week doing work experience with me to help his application to medical school. I felt touched and very old!

The second was a poem sent to me by Professor John Davison in 2007, written by Professor Geoffrey ('Bodger') Chamberlain (President of the UK Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, 1993–1994 and previous editor of *BJOG*). According to John Davison, this has been published in 1969 but I have been unable to find it. Since it is the justification for the correct spelling of a commonly used and very commonly misspelt word in papers submitted to this journal and undoubtedly many others I thought it would do no harm to republish it here:

Fetus Falsified
The unborn child is not to blame
For bastard spelling of his name.
The Romans knew their Latin best.
To Virgil, Ovid, and the rest
He was a FETUS and so stayed
Till later Isidore made
A diphthong of the vowel E

Confusing us with Dr. B
The FETAL noun you can relate
To the verb *feo* – generate.
Its origin cannot be hung
On the verb *foeto* – bring forth young.
If so, then FOETUS should adorn
The newborn child, not the unborn,
And so in mother's arms we'd see
Our FOETAL physiology.
To other words the diphong came,
But they've their old form back again.
You won't be thanked in '69
To tell your bird she's *foeminine*.
To call the FETUS transatlantic
Will drive the editors quite frantic.
Ere Norsemen on Cape Cod were wrecked,
The spelling FETUS was correct.

What is in this issue?

In this reminiscent mood, this issue contains a translation from the Portuguese of the first ever case report of amniotic fluid embolus from 1926. This is contrasted with Michael Benson's review of our current understanding of this rare but important condition. There is also a diabetes and obesity theme running through this issue. Howard Berger and Nir Melamed review the evidence supporting the timing of delivery in women with diabetes, Balani et al. present their research into the importance of visceral fat mass in obese pregnant women and its relation with pregnancy outcomes and Adegbola argues that the cut-offs for diagnosis of gestational diabetes should be adapted in Nigeria given their findings of the response to 50 g oral glucose challenge test and the pattern of preceding fasting plasma glucose in normal pregnant Nigerians.

Enjoy!

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